The Controversy about French Influence:

Nineteenth-Century American Artists in France,

1850-1900

By

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Abstract: While it is well-known that many nineteenth-century American artists were encouraged to travel to the art center of Paris to study, there were also many critics and artists who opposed this idea. Through exploring both primary and contemporary sources related to nineteenth-century American artists studying in France, I argue that there was a clear division throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century among artists and art critics about whether it was beneficial or harmful for American artists to seek training in France. Those in support of study in France had many reasons to believe the experience would be beneficial to American artists since France had better organized art academies, more alternatives to the academy, a good art market, finer museums to study at, more competitions for students, and the Salon, where artists could demonstrate their abilities and gain more exposure. Conversely, those in opposition condemned all French influence and believed American art and its institutions were superior to that in France. They claimed artists could receive all of the training they needed in America, despite the fact that many of its own artists found it lacking. While the reasons many nineteenth-century American artists studied in Paris has already been discussed by numerous art historians, the intriguing division that developed between American artists, critics, and collectors has yet to be explored. This paper affords the attention that this topic deserves and offers a new understanding of the phenomenon of American artists studying in France.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In exploring material related to nineteenth-century American artists studying in Paris, it is noticeable in an overwhelming amount of both primary and contemporary sources that there was a difference of opinion among American artists and art critics about whether it was beneficial or harmful for American artists to seek training in France. However, very little attention has been given to this particular topic. This thesis focuses on this division, specifically why Paris was more appealing to Americans in the first place, why some either supported or opposed French training, and why Americans were apparently afraid of French artists negatively influencing American artists, presumably with their styles and techniques. I argue that there was a clear division among American art critics and artists that began as early as the 1850s and strongly persisted throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, and even briefly into the early twentieth century. However, these anti-foreign influence opinions have proved to be less about the problems with French art and more about the promotion of American art. The nationalism displayed in the wake of the Civil War, coupled with the need to create an American art undoubtedly led to critics encouraging their artists to remain in America. Furthermore, the strenuous political relationship that developed between France and the United States

and the anti-Catholic sentiments of Americans is what likely fueled their criticisms of France.

It is well-known that many nineteenth-century American artists were encouraged to train in France. The reasons American artists went to Paris to study has already been explored by numerous art historians, but questions remain regarding what exactly the conditions were for artists in America in comparison to France. In particular, the reasons some artists were against study in Paris has yet to be examined in great detail in the literature on this topic. The subject of American artists in France has received considerable attention by art historians, but despite brief mentions of American resistance to Parisian study, no author has utilized the wealth of primary and secondary sources available to undertake an examination of American opposition to French training.

There are numerous books and articles on Americans studying art in France that focus on the appeal of Paris, the kind of training that was offered, particularly at the École des Beaux-Arts and the Académie Julian, the French artists that taught classes, the American students that attended them, and the impact of French training on American art, but these sources contain much repetition. Of the few recently written books and exhibition catalogues that explicitly focus on American artists in Paris, all of them explore the advantages of studying in France that attracted so many American artists, the teachers and schools available, the Paris Salon, the changing attitudes toward the French influence, and the actual impact of French artists on American painters with varying levels of consideration given.[1] Unfortunately, there is a lack of recently published journal

[1] These sources include H. Barbara Weinberg's *The Lure of Paris: Nineteenth-Century American Painters and Their French Teachers* (1991), Lois Fink's article, "American Artists in France" (1973) from *American Art Journal*, Gerald Ackerman's "Thomas Eakins and His Parisian Masters Gerome and Bonnat" (1969) from *Gazette Des Beauz-Arts/Fondee Par Charles Blanc, American Artists in Paris 1850-1910: The*

articles that explore this topic, but the two articles I did find, written by Lois Fink and Gerald Ackerman, actually include comparisons of American artists with their French Masters, such as Thomas Eakins and Léon Bonnat, to reveal the impact of the exposure to French art.[2] Although the authors Fink and Ackerman have noted French artists were influential on American students, none of these publications explore how some art critics were against this French influence and viewed it as harmful to American art.

While most of the noted secondary sources examine the topic of American artists in France comprehensively, some books and articles focus only on the conditions for artists, especially women, those attending Paris Salons, or specific French art academies they attended.[3] There are very few scholarly articles and books that focus specifically on the art training of women in France and the obstacles they faced in this profession, such as the lack of opportunities and gendered beliefs of Victorian society.[4] While Jo Ann Wein focuses on the general training of American women artists in Paris, Catherine

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Academy, the Salon, the Studio, and the Artists' Colony (2003) by Hardy George, H. Barbara Weinberg, and Gabriel Weisberg, and *Americans in Paris 1860-1900* (2006) by Kathleen Adler, David Park Curry, Erica Hirshler, Rodolphe Rapetti, Christopher Riopelle, and H. Barbara Weinberg. For full citations throughout, see the bibliography.

[2] These articles include Lois Fink's article, "American Artists in France" (1973) from *American Art Journal* and Gerald Ackerman's "Thomas Eakins and His Parisian Masters Gerome and Bonnat" (1969) from *Gazette Des Beauz-Arts/Fondee Par Charles Blanc*.

[3] Sources on conditions for artists include *Overcoming All Obstacles: The Women of the Académie Julian* (1999), Catherine Fehrer's article, "Women at the Academie Julian in Paris" (1994) in *The Burlington Magazine*, Jo Ann Wein's article, "The Parisian Training of American Women Artists" (1981) from *Woman's Art Journal*, "Lady Artists in Paris" (1890) in *The Review of Reviews*, "The American Student at the Beaux-Arts" (1881-1882) from *The Century Magazine*, and Margaret Bertha Wright's article "Art Student Life in Paris" (1880) from *The Art Amateur*. Theodore Child's article, "American Artists in Paris" (1884) in *The Art Amateur*, Helen Cole's article, "American Artists in Paris" (1899) in *Brush and Pencil*, and "Art in Paris. French and American Artists in the Salon" (1877) from *The Aldine* all focus on American artists at Paris Salons. Finally, Albert Boime's book, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (1971), Catherine Fehrer's book, *The Julian Academy, Paris, 1868-1939: Spring Exhibition, 1989*, H. Barbara Weinberg's article, "Nineteenth-Century American Painters at the Ecole Des Beaux-Arts" from *American Art Journal* (1981), and Richard Whiteing's article, "The American Student at the Beaux-Arts (1881) in *The Century Magazine* all specifically examine on French art academies.

[4] These sources include Jo Ann Wein's article, "The Parisian Training of American Women Artists" (1981) from *Woman's Art Journal*, Catherine Fehrer's article, "Women at the Académie Julian in Paris" (1994) from *The Burlington Magazine*, and *Overcoming All Obstacles: The Women of the Académie Julian* (1999).

Fehrer's publications exclusively concentrate on the history of women at the Académie Julian, especially compared to that of the male artists who studied there. Despite there being a lack of attention in this area, there is an abundance of primary sources that center on the experiences of American artists studying in Paris, particularly women.[5] One nineteenth-century author, Richard Whiteing, details the experience of American students living abroad, attending the École des Beaux-Arts, and, for women in particular, attempting to enter studios with men and encountering negative results.[6] This art critic notes that despite the difficulty women faced, there were still independent ateliers exclusively for women where they could be taught by artists like Léon Bonnat and Carolus Duran.[7] Similarly, "Lady Artists in Paris" and Margaret Bertha Wright's "Art Student Life in Paris" give some insight into conditions of the art profession in Paris and the problems women faced when training to become artists, such as not being accepted into some independent studios or academies and not having the means to live and train in France.[8] These sources provide a great example of what it was like to be a woman artist and revealed that even when they were given opportunities, the system was still flawed enough to prevent some women from becoming artists. Despite this kind of material being present, scholars have largely neglected this area of art history. Neither have they thoroughly looked at these sources in relation to American women artists' decisions to

[5] Primary sources include Richard Whiteing's "The American Student at the Beaux-Arts" (1881) from *The Century Magazine* and "Lady Artists in Paris" (1890) from *The Review of Reviews*, and Margaret Bertha Wright's article "Art Student Life in Paris" (1880) from *The Art Amateur*. Contemporary sources include Jo Ann Wein's article, "The Parisian Training of American Women Artists" (1981) from *Woman's Art Journal*, Catherine Fehrer's article, "Women at the Académie Julian in Paris" (1994) from *The Burlington Magazine*, and *Overcoming All Obstacles: The Women of the Académie Julian.*

[6] Richard Whiteing, "The American Student at the Beaux-Arts," *The Century Magazine* 23, no. 2 (December 1881): 259-272.

[7] Whiteing, 260.

[8] *"Lady Artists in Paris," The Review of Reviews 2, no. 9 (September 1890):* 231; Margaret Bertha Wright, "Art Student Life in Paris," *The Art Amateur* 3, no. 4 (September 1880): 70-71, accessed September 27, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25627198.

stay or go to Paris.

Primary sources only pertaining to American participants in Paris Salons typically mention numerous artists and describe each artwork they were planning to submit to the Salon that year.[9] These particular articles provide useful information about how many and which American artists were in Paris at different the times. Scholarly books and articles that focused specifically on French academies often only address the two most prominent, the École des Beaux Arts and Académie Julian, but they provide information regarding the establishment of each academy, its admissions process, teaching practices, and in some cases, complete lists of professors and students connected to each school.[10]

Several contemporary and primary sources also offer brief information about nineteenth-century critical reception of Americans artists studying in France, but again, not one author makes a strong case for the significant American resistance to this foreign training. H. Barbara Weinberg and Rodolphe Rapetti claim that since many American collectors were acquiring French art, which was considered superior, American artists felt that they needed to be trained by French masters if their work was also to be successful.[11] Yet, there are contemporary and even primary sources that either briefly note or discuss the condemnation of this foreign influence.[12] Weinberg focuses on the negative response

[9] Theodore Child's article, "American Artists in Paris" (1884) from *The Art Amateur*, Helen Cole's article, "American Artists in Paris" (1899) *Brush and Pencil*, and "Art in Paris. French and American Artists in the Salon" (1877) from *The Aldine* all focus on American artists at Paris Salons.

[10] These books and articles include Albert Boime's *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (1971), Catherine Fehrer's *The Julian Academy, Paris, 1868-1939: Spring Exhibition, 1989*, and H. Barbara Weinberg's article, "Nineteenth-Century American Painters at the Ecole des Beaux Arts" (1981) from *American Art Journal*.

[11] Sources include H. Barbara Weinberg's *The Lure of Paris: Nineteenth-Century American Painters and Their French Teachers* (1991), Weinberg's essay "The Lure of Paris for American Painters, 1850-1910" in *American Artists in Paris 1850-1910: The Academy, the Salon, the Studio, and the Artists' Colony* (2003), and Rodolphe Rapetti's article "Assimilation and Resistance 1880-1900" in *Americans in Paris 1860-1900* (2006).

[12] Contemporary sources include Lois Fink's article, "American Artists in France, 1850-1870" (1973) from *American Art Journal* and H. Barbara Weinberg's "Late-Nineteenth-Century American Painting:

of nineteenth-century critics and changing American attitudes about participating in foreign cultures by examining changes in subject matter in American painting and the artwork of Thomas Eakins, which the author believes reflects a long list of things he and other American artists learned in Paris.[13] In one primary source, art critic Helen Cole focuses on American artists participating in the Paris Salon and remarks on the quality of the works, suggesting they are not impressive due to the influence of European Schools.[14] Cole's article exemplifies some nineteenth-century critics' belief that French influence would make American art less American and artists would never achieve superiority over the French.[15] This nationalism is very intriguing in the wake of the Civil War, when many Americans likely felt a need to reunite and rebuild; however, the majority of recent scholars do not include this topic in their discussion.[16]

It is hard to believe that with this abundance of information on nineteenth-century American artists in France, no one has thoroughly explored the difference of opinion that developed between American critics and artists. The division that developed between American artists, critics, and collectors deserves more attention because it offers a new understanding of American artists studying in Paris. This thesis contributes significantly

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Cosmopolitan Concerns and Critical Controversies" (1983) from *Archives of American Art Journal*. Primary sources include Helen Cole's article "American Artists in Paris" (1899), Lawton Parker's "Another View of Art Study in Paris" (1902), and Edmund C. Talcott's "Some Facts about Art Study in Paris" (1902), all from *Brush and Pencil*.

[13] H. Barbara Weinberg, "Late-Nineteenth-Century-American Painting: Cosmopolitan Concerns and Critical Controversies," *Archives of American Art Journal* 23, no. 4 (1983): 19-26, accessed July 7, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1557328.

[14] Helen Cole, "American Artists in Paris," *Brush and Pencil* 4, no. 4 (July 1899): 199, accessed July 7, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25505438.

[15] Cole, 199; Lois Fink, "American Artists in France, 1850-1870," *American Art Journal* 5, no. 2 (November 1973): 42, accessed July 7, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1593953; H. Barbara Weinberg, *The Lure of Paris: Nineteenth-Century American Painters and Their French Teachers* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1991), 111; H. Barbara Weinberg, "Late-Nineteenth-Century American Painting: Cosmopolitan Concerns and Critical Controversies," *Archives of American Art Journal* 23, no. 4 (1983): 25, accessed July 7, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1557328.

[16] One exception to this oversight is H. Barbara Weinberg's article, "Late-Nineteenth-Century American Painting: Cosmopolitan Concerns and Critical Controversies" (1983).

to existing literature not only because it demonstrates that not all American artists and critics supported study in Paris, and the reasons for this has rarely been examined in detail. There is also almost no existing scholarship that explores this division in the context of the Civil War, gender, or relations with France. This investigation provides insight into how the Civil War and the United States' relationship with France impacted nineteenth-century American art and attitudes about foreign influence, and was likely the cause of American nationalism in art. Furthermore, my in-depth look at primary sources and the historical and political context of them demonstrates that the resistance to French influence that art historians have observed was not solely about preserving American art, as many have been led to believe, but rather the relationship between the United States and France. Finally, gender is left out of discussions too often, which is why it is also important and useful to explore whether American nationalism and pro-Paris sentiment was framed within terms of gender.

The art historical methods that I employ are social history, formal analysis, and a critical approach towards gender. Much of the thesis examines the historical context of nineteenth-century America and France in order to understand what led to the division between pro/anti-Paris factions. Formal analysis is utilized in examining how French art influenced American art, as some American critics and artists were worried about. Finally, gender is looked at in regards to whether or not France offered better opportunities for women than America did and if this led to more anti/pro-Paris sentiment.

In organizing the sections for this thesis, there are certain topics that proved useful in supporting its argument. First, I discuss the division of opinion among artists by

introducing the controversy, providing some background, and offering nineteenth-century accounts of those who supported training in France. This section also examines what exactly it was that made Paris appealing to so many artists and what France offered artists that America could not. This includes the fact that it was considered the art center of the world, the popularity of French art among American collectors, the training available, and the environment, particularly the countryside.

Chapter 3 focuses on the art critics that opposed study in Paris and why they were against studying in Paris. These reasons include how the Civil War affected the attitude of Americans, how the nationalism displayed mostly likely resulted from the war, and the tense political and social relations between France and America. This section will also examine the fear of foreign influence in American art conveyed by nineteenth-century critics. Chapter 4 discusses the relationship of American artists with their masters and explores the resulting impact of French training on American art, which proves that some critics were not wrong in worrying about French influence. This section analyzes the work of several American artists who trained in France during the latter half of the nineteenth century in comparison to works by the French artists they studied with and in some cases, the French artists or styles they were simply influenced by. The artists were selected based on their notability and because each embodies a different style than the next. Chapter 5 focuses on the division of opinion among collectors, specifically how collectors felt, American collectors that are known to have purchased or rejected French art, what kind of impact the market had on this question, and if there were international politics involved. Finally, the conclusion discusses how all of this affected American art moving forward, particularly how nineteenth-century attitudes informed the controversy

that was sparked by the Armory Show in 1913, which was condemned for bringing in European influence, or the triumph that was felt after World War II, when people decided that New York was the center of modern art.

CHAPTER II

SUPPORT OF PARISIAN TRAINING

While it is well-known that many nineteenth-century American artists were encouraged to travel to the art center of Paris to study, there were also many critics and artists who opposed this idea. Those in support of study in Paris had many reasons to believe the experience would be beneficial to American artists. France had better organized art academies, more alternatives to the academy, a good art market, finer museums to study at, more competitions for students, and the Salon, where artists could exhibit their abilities and gain more exposure for their career. The following four examples demonstrate the nature of support for Parisian training in the nineteenth century.

Encouragement to study in France can be found within several primary sources that praise French painting, teachers, and training over American art. In 1850, an article from the *Bulletin of the American Art-Union* promoted travel to Paris, stating that "The vast concentration at Paris of every kind of artistic material--the habits of the French people themselves--the resources for economical living--the entire independence and absence of restraint on the part of every well-behaved foreigner--render that city one of

the most delectable places for an Artist in the world."[17] The author further encouraged artists to study in Paris by noting

> "As there is every species and variety of Art in Paris, from miserable one centime lithographs up to the elaborate engravings after the works of De la Roche, Ingres, and Scheffer, so there are as many ways and means of pursuing studies in the different departments….The Louvre, with its immense galleries of paintings and statuary, contains one of the finest collections in the world."[18]

In his 1897 article "On American Art," critic Sadakichi Hartmann asserted that the French technique is the "proper" way to make art and there is a group of Americans that have as their motto, "Glory to the French! The French are the masters. Let us imitate the French. Then we will get there."[19] Even in 1902, Edmund C. Talcott from *Brush and Pencil* noted that even the greatest art professors in America supported attending art courses in Paris, but only after graduation, presumably from an American art school.[20]

In the same year, another writer for *Brush and Pencil*, Lawton S. Parker, discussed what he believed to be the benefits study in Paris. To Parker, an important advantage of training in Paris was that the French professors had more experience with "fine old paintings" in Europe and he believed that "the simple methods of the old

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[17] T. H., "Parisian Hints for Artists," *Bulletin of the American Art-Union* No. 5 (August 01, 1850): 75, accessed April 01, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/20646768?ref=search-gateway:a49863708bd8899780e3ee6ef5f5440e.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Sadakichi Hartmann, "On American Art," *The Art News* 1, no. 4 (June 1, 1897): 2, accessed September 27, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/20494598?ref=no-x-route:3c615d765c0386178cecf9db6d39d008.
[20] Edmund C. Talcott, "Some Facts about Art Study in Paris," *Brush and Pencil* 10, no. 2 (May 1902): 122, accessed September 27, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/25505754?ref=no-x-route:b5efcd796beb4c0d016346d3599b69de.

masters can be more easily explained by them."[21] Additionally, Parker argued that the current system at American schools was not only unhelpful to artists, but detrimental, and in order to improve these schools "more effort should be made to send our instructors abroad.[22] Finally, Parker recommended that as long as American art schools remain this way, Americans continue to hold views of superiority, and students are told they have talent, these students "should lose no time in going to see if Parisian masters will also accredit him with having talent."[23]

It is clear from these examples that many believed there were several advantages to training in Paris and that American artists should strive to imitate the French, lest they continue to be inferior. Supporters believed that French artists were the best professors to study with since Paris had become the art capital and by learning the techniques of them, American artists would eventually be able to create their own school of painting. As a much older country than the United States, French artists were also thought to have more exposure to and a better understanding of the paintings of old European masters. America being a relatively young country compared to France, its art schools were also evidently found lacking unlike the longstanding art academies in France. Whatever the specific reasons each artist had for going to Paris, there were certainly more than enough to go around.

Impetus for Interest in France

By the 1860s, at least 85 American artists lived in Paris, but this number

[21] Lawton S. Parker, "Another View of Art Study in Paris," *Brush and Pencil* 11, no. 1 (October 1902): 12, accessed September 27, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/25505805?ref=no-x-route:bab2f700ada4d91fe218b3473ee0e3a7.
[22] Parker, 12; 16.
[23] Parker, 16.

continued to rise after this period.[24] The number of artists seeking training in Paris increased to a point that in the 1880s, Henry James famously stated, "When today we look for 'American Art' we find it mainly in Paris. When we find it out of Paris, we at least find a great deal of Paris in it."[25] One reason that art historian Lois Fink cites for the mass exodus to Paris is the 1867 Exposition held in Paris from April 1st to November 3rd, in which American artists became cognizant of their art in comparison to foreign art and felt the need to have art training similar with that of European artists.[26] However, there were some American artists, like William Morris Hunt and Thomas Eakins, who traveled to France before the Exposition took place in 1867. Given this information and the early encouragement of French training in the 1850s, it seems likely that the Exposition of 1855 in Paris also played a significant role in convincing artists of the benefits of French training. An American reviewer of the exhibition even stated that "France, in my opinion, (and I am confident of the concurrence of my artist friends here), takes the lead in Art, certainly in the art of painting."[27] Furthermore, he asserted "If we wish for the best pictures of the day, the best in conception, in character, in skillfulness and vigor of treatment, and by far the best in color (without which every picture is defective), we must, I think, go the Frenchmen."[28]

Additionally, French art became popular among many American art collectors in the nineteenth century, such as William Thompson Walters, Louisine Havemeyer, and Adolph E. Borie, and likely convinced some American artists that they needed to adopt a

[24] Fink, 34.
[25] Henry James, "John S. Sargent," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*75 (October 1887): 683.
[26] Fink, 43.
[27] "Correspondence," *The Crayon* 2, no. 13 (September 26, 1855): 198, accessed April 17, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/25527258?ref=search-gateway:9f8a7580660be0c806599082e585b85b.
[28] Ibid.

French style or learn their techniques to become successful.[29] Finally, as the leading market in all of Europe, the art market in Paris was surely an appealing benefit for American artists, especially if they previously struggled to make a living in the United States. The annual sales of paintings averaged 40 million francs or 8 million dollars.[30]

Condition of the Arts in America

The condition of the arts in America was also considered lacking by many of its artists, making it no surprise that many sought training in Paris. Art critic Earl Shinn, who was a student at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in the late 1850s and early 1860s, criticized the Academy in 1884: "No instruction was provided, but the older students assisted their juniors to the best of their ability. During each winter weekly lectures on anatomy were delivered by a physician who had no great opinion of the requirements of a congregation of art students."[31] When asked about the condition of American art education in the 1860s, Thomas Eakins stated, "The facilities for study in this country were meager. There were even no life classes in our art schools and schools of painting. Naturally one had to seek instruction elsewhere, abroad."[32] For women, becoming an artist was already challenging because of Victorian notions about gender that claimed women were physically and mentally inferior, but they also had difficulty being admitted into American art schools.[33] When they were able to attend classes, it caused an upheaval, especially when a life class was created specifically for women at

[29] Hardy George, H. Barbara Weinberg, and Gabriel Weisberg, *Americans in Paris, 1850-1910: The Academy, the Salon, the Studio, and the Artists' Colony* (Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma City Museum of Art, 2003), 13.
[30] Fink, 34.
[31] Lloyd Goodrich, *Thomas Eakins* (Cambridge, MA: Published for the National Gallery of Art Harvard University Press, 1982), 9.
[32] Goodrich, 10.
[33] Jo Ann Wein, "The Parisian Training of American Women Artists," *Woman's Art Journal* 2, no. 1 (1981): 41, accessed July 13, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1357900.

the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts in the early1860s.[34] Victorians already regarded a profession in the arts as an unsuitable occupation for women, but this coupled with life classes likely made it even more inappropriate.

French Art Academies

One of the major advantages of study in Paris was the possible attendance at the prestigious art school, the École des Beaux-Arts. The École was open not only to French artists, but foreign ones as well. To be admitted to the École, applicants had to be men between fifteen and twenty-five years of age and had to pass an examination that was given only twice a year.[35] Foreign artists also had to apply for admission to the École through their country's government, which could take up to nine months.[36] Alternatives to the École des Beaux-Arts were the other government school, the École de Dessin, or the independent ateliers where students could be admitted any time during the year without the rules and regulations of the École. Although a few Americans artists were enrolled at the École before the 1860s, the majority of them attended the academy after the superintendent of Fine Arts, the Comte de Niewerkerke, modified the school's curriculum and administration in 1863.[37] As a result of these changes, control was no longer in the hands of Academicians, teaching positions were given to practicing artists, and the curriculum began to include courses in art history, aesthetics, archaeology, and applied science.[38] After the École's new changes, some of the artists initially appointed as professors included Jean-Léon Gérôme, Alexandre Cabanel, and Isidore Pils. All of

[34] Ibid.
[35] Weinberg (1991), 16.
[36] Fink, 36.
[37] Weinberg (1991), 15.
[38] Fink, 36.

which are known to have painted in the Academic style, which is characterized as highly polished and depicting a mythological or historical subject.

Another art school, the Académie Julian, was founded in 1869 by Rodolphe Julian. The institution was initially comprised of three studios in the Passage du Havre, two for men and one for women, and by 1890, it had five ateliers for men and four for women.[39] Julian was able to convince well-known painters and sculptors to become visiting professors for his school.[40] Tony Roberty-Fleury taught in the women's studio, and Gustave Boulanger, William Bouguereau, and Jules LeFebvre were professors in the two men's studios.[41] Acting as visiting professors, instructors at the Académie were not paid, but students were charged a small fee for the room and the models, and any extra money went towards a cash prize for the best study of the season.[42] The Académie Julian became very popular among Americans with notable students including Elizabeth Gardner, Childe Hassam, Robert Henri, Kenyon Cox, and Cecilia Beaux.[43]

Barbizon and Ecouen

Many of the Americans artists who studied in France also travelled to other cities outside of Paris to train with French artists, particularly in Barbizon and Ecouen. While Barbizon was a great location for landscape painting, it could also act as "a refuge from the competitive pressures of the art world in Paris."[44] Since they were no longer in an art center, away from the Salon and art academies, these artists likely had more freedom to paint whatever subjects the wished and in whichever style they preferred. The first

[39] Wein, 42.
[40] Wein, 14.
[41] Fink, 38.
[42] Fink, 37-38.
[43] Weinberg (1991), 222
[44] Fink, 38.

French artists to settle in Barbizon were Theodore Rousseau, Camille Corot, Charles-François Daubigny, Jules Dupre, Constant Troyon, Jean-François Millet, and Charles Jacque in the 1840s.[45] American painters who sought training in Barbizon include William Babcock in 1849, William Morris Hunt in 1853, and Edward Wheelwright in 1855, all of whom became students of Millet.[46]

Another location in which American painters sought training was Ecouen, just 13 miles north of Paris. The French painter Pierre Édouard Frère settled there in 1855, drawing artists from various nations to create a colony.[47] Unlike Barbizon, Ecouen was still very much involved with the art scene in Paris because of its proximity, and artists typically lived in nicer environments, such as the chateau there.[48] Several American artists who lived in Ecouen before 1870 were James C. Thom, George Boughton, Samuel Frost Johnson, Henry Bacon, and James Wells Champney. Additionally, other locales outside of Paris were popular with American artists, particularly Brittany and Normandy in the 1860s. Artists such as William Morris Hunt, Benjamin Champney, C. A. Way, Robert Wylie, Earl Shinn, Howard Roberts, and F. A. Bridgman spent summers working in Pont Aven in Brittany.[49]

Paris Salons

A unique benefit of studying in Paris was the opportunity to see recent works of fellow French and foreign artists at the Salon exhibitions. For those participating in the Salon, awards were available and ranged from third-class medals worth 250 francs each

[45] Adler et al, 117.
[46] Fink, 38.
[47] Fink, 39.
[48] Fink, 40.
[49] Ibid.

to the Medal of Honor that yielded 4,000 francs to the winner, and finally to a grand prize of 100,000 francs (the equivalent of $20,000).[50] Many American artists participated in these salon exhibitions. In the five salons during the 1850s, thirty Americans were represented, and another thirteen exhibited at the Exposition Universelle of 1855.[51] During 1860s, 104 American artists were represented at the nine salons in that period while fifty-one exhibited at the Exposition of 1867.[52] Having artwork accepted into the prestigious Paris Salon among some of the most famous contemporary artists surely enhanced an American artist's status at home and abroad. However, the Salon could also be an "eye-opener" for Americans and an affirmation of the superiority of French painting over all other schools.[53]

Returning to America

Nineteenth-century American artists returning from France faced criticism and resistance from their fellow countrymen, particularly artists who had chosen to stay in America and critics who opposed studying abroad. Artists who became targets of criticism include William Morris Hunt and George Inness, artists whose works were believed by their contemporaries to demonstrate a strong French influence.[54] In 1855, *The Knickerbocker* described Inness' painting, *The Banks of Tin Brook*, as "a mass of green cheese, dotted with sheep."[55] After studying in Paris and returning to America, some artists were unhappy with the condition of the arts in America in comparison to France and either took long trips back to Europe, decided to move there permanently, or moved

[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Fink, 42.
[55] "Editor's Table," *The Knickerbocker* 45, no. 5 (May 1855): 533.

to New York City instead of going back to their home towns.[56] It was not until after the Civil War that the nationalist attitude expressed by critics began to subside, but some still maintained their view throughout the end of the century.[57]

It is clear why those who encouraged training in France believed it would be more beneficial to American artists. France's academies were prestigious, long-standing, and there were a variety of institutions and instructors to choose from, rather than having older students educate the younger, as was the case at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Although the higher cost could be a drawback for women artists, there were many more studios in France than in America that welcomed women. When students were not busy training in their studios, they had the option to study at some of the finest museums in the world. The Salon not only acted as a proving ground, but exhibiting in one of the shows provided artists with a chance to show off their abilities, gain the exposure needed attract patrons, and compete for a cash prize. Finally, American artists were able to learn the style and techniques of some of the world's most successful artists at the time. With all the benefits and opportunities France had to offer, it is difficult to see how anybody could be opposed to French art training.

[56] Fink, 43.
[57] George et al, 13.

CHAPTER III

OPPOSITION TO PARISIAN TRAINING

Those in opposition to American study in France typically condemned all foreign influence and believed American art and its institutions were superior to those in France, and that artists could receive all of the training they needed in America, despite the fact that many of its own artists found it lacking. Some art historians note that provincialism was strongly being encouraged in the arts during the 1850s and 1860s, with the concepts and techniques circulating in France being rejected by critics and artists and regarded as the wrong direction for American art.[58] However, publications from the period prove that this nativism was present throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. Those in opposition believed that Americans going abroad to study with foreign artists was unnecessary. In A. J. H. Duganne's 1853 book, *Art's True Mission in America*, he claimed that in America, "in our fresh, healthy land, that the new and sublime advent of Art may be looked for."[59] He also believed that American art could only become superior to European art if American artists remained uninfluenced from the "decadent, worn-out

[58] Fink, 42.
[59] A. J. H. Duganne, *Art's True Mission in America* (New York: Appleton, 1853), 28.

European traditions."[60]

Similarly, in Joel T. Headley's address before the American Art-Union in 1845, the New York author and politician suggested that "if we could only release ourselves from that strange infatuation about foreign artists, and foreign literature, and foreign everything, and dare and love to be ourselves, we should soon have an *American* literature, an *American* school of art, as well as a peculiar form of government."[61] Several years later in an 1851 article celebrating the life of artist William Sidney Mount, W. Alfred Jones praises the national character of Mount's works and claims that "Had Mount gone abroad at the time, he might very probably have learned new secrets of coloring; but as probably he would have been confused by the brilliancy of so much excellence, and, in his attempt to gain too much facility, have lost his distinctive local freshness, and untaught, natural beauties. A truly national painter might have been sacrificed to the varied accomplishments of a tasteful artist of the schools. Perhaps it was the wisest for him to have remained at home…"[62]

In remarking on American art in *The Crayon* in 1855, Horatio Greenough wrote "That youth must be taught is clear—but in framing an institution for that object, if we look to countries grown old in European systems, it must be for warning rather than example."[63]According to Greenough, there were several reasons why European systems were considered harmful to artists, including the views that "faith is insisted on rather than works," "pupils are required to be not only docile but submissive," "they are not

[60] Duganne, 28.
[61] Sarah Burns and John Davis, *American Art to 1900: A Documentary History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009),
[62] Burns, 312.
[63] Horatio Greenough, "Remarks on American Art," *The Crayon* 2, no. 12 (September 19, 1855): 178, accessed September 27, 2015, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/25527188?ref=no-x-route:34a4f8f349e3a22563a87809795b867d.

free," and "the giving a false preference to readiness of hand over power of thought."[64] Greenough claimed that even the great painters and sculptors of Europe stated to Americans that "Academies, furnished though they be with all the means to form the eye, the hand and the mind of the pupil, are positively hindrances instead of helps to Art."[65] Finally, Greenough asserted "there is at present no country where the development and growth of an artist is more free, healthful, and happy than it is in these United States.[66]

Additionally, a critic from the *New York Tribune* who reviewed an exhibition in 1860 stated, "These young men who have not enjoyed the disadvantage of European study, are the artists to whom we must look for freshness of thought and American sentiment."[67] While Hartmann briefly noted how some American teachers encouraged study in Paris, he also claimed that while American art students in Paris followed James Abbott McNeill Whistler's art theory of cosmopolitanism, they could have become better artists in America.[68] Forty years later, similar sentiments were still being expressed. In Helen Cole's 1899 article, "American Artists in Paris," she asserts that "there is nothing strikingly new or original, no strong individuality that will impress itself on the generation of budding painters, no one who is born 'chef d'école.' Perhaps the Americans are still too much under the influence of the European schools, too uncertain of themselves, for us to expect this."[69]

Although art critic Edmund Talcott previously stated that American art professors encouraged studying in Paris after graduation, he claims it is "for the many a needless

[64] Greenough, 178-179.
[65] Greenough, 179.
[66] Greenough, 179.
[67] "Art Items," *New York Tribune*, January 17, 1860.
[68] Hartmann, 1.
[69] Cole, 199.

waste of time, and an unwise courting of hardship and danger."[70] For the art students that do end up travelling to Paris, they are "ruined" and the "idleness, dissipation of energies resulting from travel, and the temptations incident to residence abroad have robbed them of the proud prestige which they acquired in their American schools."[71] Finally, Talcott suggests American instructors should warn young, naive, or poor students, especially female art students, against rejecting the opportunities offered at home in favor of an unbeneficial experience of studying in Paris.[72]

While it is apparent that many opposed training in Paris, female artists were discouraged more than men. In Talcott's opinion, it is of greater importance that women be mature and financially stable, even more so than men, if they plan to go Paris.[73] He described men as being "better able to endure uncertainties, and even privations" than women.[74] Instead of encouraging American women to study abroad, Talcott wished for someone knowledgeable of American art schools to explain to women how many opportunities and advantages were available to them at home, including "art teachers of the very best, the instructors being men whose names rank as high as those of many of the Frenchmen, while their interest in the work and their knowledge of and care of the feelings of their countrywomen are of a nature found only in America."[75] Talcott got his wish when The Fellowship of the Alumni of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts took up the cause of "discouraging the uncalled-for exodus of young and unprepared girls intending to study art in Paris" by submitting a document around the early twentieth

[70] Talcott, 122.
[71] Talcott, 126.
[72] Talcott, 124.
[73] Talcott, 123.
[74] Talcott, 123.
[75] Talcott, 123.

century that asserted that the number of American art schools had increased and were so greatly improved that some American artists living in the United States and abroad believed American schools were superior to the Parisian studios for women.[76] To further dissuade women, the document explained how expensive it was for women to live in Paris and how the poor, unsanitary living conditions could lead to illness.[77]

Despite how opposed the aforementioned critics were to American artists training with French artists and adopting their styles and methods, not one of these critics explicitly pointed out what they believed was wrong with European, particularly French, art or which stylistic elements they did not want American artists to be influenced by. There is no mention of technique, color application, or even subject in these objections. Rather, these anti-foreign influence opinions are less about the problems with French art and more about promoting American art and its schools over those in France. According to the negative opinions of the critics in these articles, American art was fresh, original, and its artists were free to create how and what they liked, whereas European art was old and unoriginal. European nations were certainly much older than America was, but there is still no clear indication as to what exactly art critics consider so old and unoriginal about French art. Based on these articles, some Americans also appeared to have a problem with France being decadent and full of temptations, as if American artists returning from study in France would somehow corrupt the United States. If there are no complaints about specific aspects of French art, however, then what motivated some Americans to be so against their artists training in Paris?

[76] Talcott, 124.
[77] Talcott, 125-126.

American Nationalism

Within the negative critiques of study in Paris, there is typically a lack of explanation as to which specific aspects of French art and training were repugnant. Instead, it seems that the nationalistic attitudes of Americans were as the result of the Civil War and relations with France. The following examples demonstrate that during and after the tragedy of the Civil War, there were many Americans that felt the need for unification and the fabrication of a new national identity. In 1861 in his presidential address, the National Academy's vice president, Charles Cromwell Ingham, stated that "Union for the country, is the word on every lip, & the feeling in every heart. Let us not however, in our love of Country, forget our love of Art, nor forget that if union is good in the nation, it is also good among the Artists, & as unity in a nation is absolutely necessary to obtain the respect of society."[78] It is clear from Ingham's statement that both the nationalist attitudes portrayed in the negative views of Parisian training and the urge to create an American school of art were likely also as a result of this idea to unify and refashion a new American identity.

Ingham was not alone in his sentiments. After the war, a writer for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* explained in 1867 that Northerners were hoping for "a reunion of the people North and South—a reunion of hearts and a reunion of hands" to achieve "the prosperity of our people and the glory and honor of our common country."[79] Several years later in 1871, the *Boston Evening Transcript* urged the sections to foster "friendly relations" in order to boost commerce and industry so that "the whole republic grows in

[78] Burns, 512.
[79] Heather Cox. Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901*(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 26.

greatness."[80] Even a decade after the Civil War, citizens like Colonel Thomas Y. Simons of the Light Infantry of South Carolina were expressing the similar thoughts of reunion:

> "That war over, reconciliation, peace and fraternity are the words which we hear next our hearts. There is no higher duty which patriotism invokes us to perform than to act toward each other as friends and brethren in the advancement of the cause for which our fathers shed their blood."[81]

While white Northerners generally wanted reunite more so than white Southerners, the South still echoed these same feelings in poetry, political declarations, mass demonstrations, and newspaper articles, and both groups wanted to turn the "horribly devastating event" that was the Civil War into "a grand moment of spiritual rebirth for the nation."[82]

With all the calls for unification of America and forging a new national identity, it is certainly understandable why those that criticized American artists studying in Paris were so determined to keep their artists in the United States. Overall, the American people wanted to maintain a united front and rebuild and progress as nation. Similarly, the aforementioned critics wanted there to be an American school of art and for this school to be superior to its European counterparts, but in order for this to happen, American artists needed to remain united and uninfluenced by another country.

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[80] Cox, 26.
[81] "THE TRUE PATRIOT," *Advocate of Peace (1847-1884)* 6, no. 8/9 (August 01, 1875): 55, accessed March 01, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27905927?ref=search-gateway:1789a702cd15ae81e23834b485c29693.
[82] William Alan Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 109; Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 14.

Relations with France

It is also possible that some American critics did not want artists studying in Paris because of tensions created from the French, particularly Napoleon III, sympathizing with the Confederacy; as he desired to diminish the increasing power of the United States and plant a French Emperor in the New World.[83] In a letter printed in the *Richmond Enquirer* in 1863, a Frenchmen in support of the South asserted that most of his fellow citizens also sympathized with Confederacy, except for "'the demagogues, the Red Republicans, the Communists,' and those 'who decreed the abolition of slavery in the colonies' in 1848."[84] Although in the end France remained neutral in the Civil War, because of the neutrality of England, both the North and South apparently felt wronged since France never chose a side.[85]

Relations with France were further complicated by its continuing intervention in Mexico. When the Benito Juarez administration in Mexico was unable to repay its debts to Europe in 1861, the French, British, and Spanish sent an expedition of ten thousand troops to obtain what they were owed.[86] After the British and Spanish departed, however, the French remained to make additional demands on the Mexican government and install a puppet government under the Austrian archduke Maximilian in 1863.[87] In the opinion of William H. Seward, the United States Secretary of State, foreign interference in the Western hemisphere violated the Monroe Doctrine, which designated that part of the

[83] David Herbert Donald, Jean H. Baker, and Michael F. Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Norton, 2001), 323; Terry L. Jones, *The American Civil War* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 162.
[84] Andre M. Fleche, *The Revolution of 1861: The American Civil War in the Age of Nationalist Conflict* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 148.
[85] Donald, 309.
[86] Donald, 323.
[87] Fleche, 154.

world as under American control and prohibited the founding of new colonies, and endangered the Union.[88] There were even claims that Napoleon III might attempt to capture Texas as well.[89] Given France's desire for Mexico, it makes sense that they would support the Confederacy in order to keep the United States divided and too weak to threaten Napoleon III's plan.

Anti-Catholic Sentiments

The post-Civil War nationalism portrayed by many of the previously mentioned critics may have been religiously inspired as well, since there was a reemergence of anti-Catholic nativism during the mid-nineteenth century and many of the French were Catholic.[90] Anti-Catholicism in America originated from anxieties that resulted from conflicts with Catholic missionaries, citizens going abroad, and by the arrival of millions of Catholic immigrants from Ireland, and then Southern and Eastern Europe to the United States.[91] The hierarchical structure of the Catholic church was thought to conflict with the American practice of representative government, and the idea of the pope having any authority over American residents in voting made some feel it was "repugnant to our republican institutions."[92] Many Protestants also condemned Catholics as backward and dangerous.[93] In the preface to their examination of missions to South America in 1894, E.C. Millard and Lucy E. Guiness claimed that Catholicism was "corrupt at its core" and would only result in "indifference, sensuality, infidelity, and anarchy."[94] The terms used in these examples of anti-Catholicism echo the negative views on American artists

[88] Donald, 323; Jones, 236.
[89] Donald, 323.
[90] Blum, 198.
[91] Blum, 224.
[92] Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism: An Interpretative Essay* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), 143.
[93] Blum, 224.
[94] Blum, 224.

studying in Paris. They demonstrate that there was an overall belief that Catholic Europeans were immoral and treacherous individuals who should be avoided, lest it lead to the corruption of American institutions. This religious nativism even worked to unite the American people against a common enemy, rather than them wasting energy fighting each other.

The previously discussed statements of art critics in this chapter clearly demonstrate that there were actually many Americans who opposed artists going abroad to study in France. Though it may seem like some were against the influence of French art on the surface, these critics' complaints were not really about the art or training. None of the critics adequately explain what they felt was wrong with French art, whether it be subject matter, technique, color application, or style. Rather, these critics were more concerned with promoting their own art and academies so that they could become superior to those in France. This nationalism is understandable when considering some Americans made similar calls for unification and reconstruction after the Civil War. Additionally, when art critics did reference France in their criticisms, it was less about art and more about the issues America had with the country in general. This was likely the result of the strenuous relationship that had developed between France and the United States because of Napoleon III's initial sympathy with the Confederacy and then later neutrality, France's intervention in Mexico, and the anti-Catholic attitudes of Americans.

CHAPTER IV

FRENCH INFLUENCE ON AMERICAN ART

Art critics who feared American artists studying in France would lead to too much foreign influence were not entirely wrong in their worrying. In an article from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* in 1877, "Home Subjects for American Art," the author remarked on an exhibition of American art by noting that "Most of the work was merely imitation; it was executed abroad under the influence of foreign teachers, and, in the majority of cases, the subjects were foreign as well as the methods."[95] While some of the American artists who studied in France simply took with them the basics from their art training and developed their own style, others adopted both the style and subject matter of their masters. There are also some instances in which American artists did not follow closely in their master's footsteps, but rather were impacted by fellow contemporary French artists. Because of the popularity of French art in America, some French-trained American artists may have intentionally tried to paint like their French masters in order to become just as successful and popular. The same author of "Home Subjects" also claimed that American artists could not be faulted for pursuing foreign instruction or implementing foreign methods and models because "they find it necessary to go abroad

[95] Burns, 567.

if they desire to be patronized at home."[96] Additionally, Allen Thorndike Rice from *North American Review* asserts that because of patrons' tastes, painters were encouraged to create "bad imitations and superficial reproductions of foreign and especially French schools."[97] A close examination of selected works by American artists who studied in Paris and Barbizon during the latter half of the nineteenth century compared to works of their French masters and, in one case, their contemporaries will reveal a clear French influence.

William Morris Hunt and Jean-François Millet

William Morris Hunt (1824-1879) was initially a student at the popular atelier of Thomas Couture, but was soon influenced by the Barbizon school, especially the work of Jean-François Millet (1814-1875). Categorized as a realist, Millet is known for his rural scenes of peasant labor. Hunt travelled to Europe in 1843 with his family, studying art for nine months in Dusseldorf and settling in Paris in 1846 to continue his art training. He was first introduced to Millet's work when he saw *The Sower* (1850) [Figure 1] at the Salon of 1850.[98] Greatly admiring Millet's work, Hunt purchased this piece just two years later when he went to Barbizon to study with Millet and continued to purchase additional works, even encouraging others to do so.[99] Hunt trained with Millet for two years before returning to America in 1855. His training with Millet was not particularly formal, but Hunt learned important lessons that would later significantly affect his artworks. The two of them would often take walks through the forest or plains, and Millet

[96] Burns, 567.
[97] Allen Thorndike Rice, "The Progress of Painting in America," *North American Review* 124, no. 256 (May 01, 1877): 459, accessed February 27, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/25110052?ref= search- gateway:4104a95db3bbb0fda7c2b4931a10e7a5.
[98] Sally Webster, *William Morris Hunt, 1824-1879* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 27.
[99] Webster, 27.

would remark on the "value of a figure in the field, to the way in which a cart-wheel settled into the ground, to an effect of sunlight, or of distance."[100] Millet would typically never assist his student with any of his works, except for one instance in which he advised Hunt to work harder on a drawing.[101] Hunt himself once described the impact Millet had on him: "When I came to know Millet I took broader views of humanity, of the world, of life. His subjects were real people who had work to do. If he painted a hay-stack it suggested life, animal as well as vegetable, and the life of man."[102]

Hunt's artwork was influenced by both the subject matter and the style of Millet. This is apparent in the similarities between Millet's *Sower* and Hunt's *La Marguerite II* (1852) [Figure 2]. While Hunt's depiction echoes Millet's images of rural labor, it is considerably more romantic in its presentation, portraying a peasant looking down at a piece of hay in her hand rather than working. On the other hand, the figure in Millet's work is in the process of sowing seeds. However, both works share the same soft, loose brushstrokes, and dark, earthy color palette. Millet's influence becomes quite apparent when Hunt's *La Marguerite II* is compared to a previous version done before he began his training with Millet, *La Marguerite I* (1851) [Figure 3]. While both versions are very similar with the same subject, their treatments are dramatically different on close inspection. The second version has an overall softer appearance all over the canvas than the first. In *La Marguerite I*, one can see individual strands of hay in the bottom portion, but in the later version, the hay stalks are less clear and all of them blend together because of the loose brushstrokes, much like the field in Millet's *The Sower*. The texture

[100] Helen M. Knowlton, *Art-life of William Morris Hunt* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1899), 11-12.
[101] Knowlton, 18.
[102] Knowlton, 12.

of the woman's skin, her clothes, and even the sky in *La Marguerite I* is much rougher than the smooth velvety finish present in *La Marguerite II*. It comes as no surprise how alike Hunt's and Millet's artworks look since in addition to training with Millet, Hunt would have been able to study the works of Millet that he purchased as long as he wanted.

Thomas Eakins and Jean-Léon Gérôme

One of the most notable American student and French master pairs is that of Thomas Eakins (1844-1916) and Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904). Although Eakins studied drawing at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia in 1861, he also trained in Paris at the École des Beaux-Arts from October 1866 to November 1869, spending the majority of his time at the atelier of Gérôme. Known for his Academic style, Gérôme painted portraits, historical scenes, Greek mythology, and was considered a master of Orientalism. During his time with Gérôme, Eakins was initially not allowed to paint, only to draw.[103] He received Gérôme's criticism twice a week and in 1867, after five months of drawing, Gérôme finally permitted Eakins to begin painting.[104] Eakins remained devoted to Gérôme for the rest of his life, praising him and even encouraging his own students to study with Gérôme.[105]

While there has been a nationalistic desire by some to describe Eakins' work as "purely American and free of foreign influence," his and Gérôme's style and technique share many similarities despite differences in subject matter.[106] This can be seen in a

[103] Llyod Goodrich, 23.
[104] Lloyd Goodrich, *Thomas Eakins* (Cambridge, MA: Published for the National Gallery of Art Harvard University Press, 1982), 23.
[105] Gerald M. Ackerman, "Thomas Eakins and His Parisian Masters Gerome and Bonnat," *Gazette Des Beauz-Arts/Fondee Par Charles Blanc*, no. 73 (1969): 235.
[106] Ackerman, 235.

comparison of Eakins' artwork *Swimming* (also known as *The Swimming Hole*) (1885) [Figure 4] and Gérôme's painting *La Grande piscine à Brusa* (1885) [Figure 5]. In his work, Gérôme has depicted several nude women in lounging around an octagonal hot pool in a Turkish bath that is set under the great dome of the caldarium in Yeni Kaplica. Eakins similarly depicts six men swimming and lounging naked at Dove Lake in Pennsylvania.

While Gérôme's piece was definitely created in his signature style of naturalism, Eakins' is slightly less so. *Swimming Hole* is naturalistic, but lacks the same *fini* or smooth surface seen in Gérôme's work. As in the style of naturalism, both pieces attempt to portray the true effect of light on objects and water, as well as movement in the human form. In *La Grande piscine*, beams of sunlight come down to illuminate the right portion of the image, creating spots of sunlight on the tile, while leaving the areas under the two left arches in shadow. Although Eakins does not capture the sun's rays in his image, it can still be discerned that the sun is likely positioned to the left since the backs of the four men on the rock are illuminated. The water in *La Grande piscine* takes on the appearance of natural flowing water as the woman in the middle of the bath and the three women sitting on the edge create ripples. The same effect can be seen in Eakins' work, in which the water in the foreground is rippling from the swimmers in contrast to the still appearance of the water further in the background. Impressively, both artists also rendered the reflection of the men and women's bodies in the water, giving the water a naturalistic appearance. Gérôme demonstrates his mastery of the human form by portraying the movement of muscle and flesh as the body turns and the suppleness of the women's skin. He even managed to drape the women's dresses naturalistically. Likewise,

Eakins also displays his skills in rendering the movement of the human body in the nude by depicting all of the men in different poses that manage to highlight their muscle definition. Some of them are lounging or standing on a large rock while others are moving through the water. Both artists appear to have employed the same strategy in positioning their figures, each even featuring a prominent nude standing in a *contrapposto* pose. This emphasis on the nude figure by both artists is not surprising, as Gérôme took up its study when he started to sculpt in the late 1870s. It is clear from this comparison that although these artists did not paint the same subjects, Eakins definitely takes after Gérôme in his compositional techniques and strategies when attempting to portray a scene naturalistically.

Charles Sprague Pearce and Léon Bonnat

Another American artist, albeit one who has not been given sufficient attention, is Charles Sprague Pearce (1851-1914). Taking the advice of his friend and fellow artist, William Morris Hunt, Pearce travelled to Paris in 1873 and enrolled in the atelier of Léon Bonnat (1833-1922).[107] Bonnat was a leading academic painter who was acclaimed for his genre scenes, history paintings, and portraits, and who also had his own independent atelier for students. During his career Pearce mostly followed in Bonnat's footsteps by initially focusing on history paintings which were often Biblical in character, then completing portraits, and finally creating numerous genre scenes during the latter part of his career. His earliest works were generally inspired from his travels to Egypt and Algeria, and often show a strong resemblance to Bonnat in the modeling of the subject

[107] Kathleen Adler et al., *Americans in Paris, 1860-1900* (London: National Gallery, 2006), 251.

and treatment of light and shadow. After 1885, he continued to live in France and bought a farm in Auvers-sur-Oise,[108] where he painted scenes of rural life.

Representing the type of sentimental peasant genre subject commonly seen in French works of the 1860s and 1870s, Pearce's painting *L'Italienne* (1875) [Figure 6], also known as *At the Fountain*, is a portrayal of a studio model dressed in an Italian peasant costume, standing next to a stone fountain. Its compositional elements recall several of Bonnat's artworks of Italian peasant women. While studying in Rome from 1858 to 1860, Bonnat compiled sketches of young Italian women and once he returned to France, he utilized these studies in the creation of large genre paintings of Italian girls in the 1860s and 1870s. By the time Pearce became a student of Bonnat in 1873, his master would have had several of these works completed and Pearce likely would have seen some of them. Bonnat's *Italian Woman* (mid-1860s) [Figure 7] in comparison to Pearce's *L'Italienne* reveals many similarities and certainly suggests that Pearce was inspired by Bonnat, especially since there is no mention of him ever traveling to Italy himself. Besides the fact that both of the young girls in these works are meant to be Italian, as implied by their native dress, the styles they are rendered in are very much alike. Each figure has a relatively naturalistic appearance, but Bonnat's lacks the detail and accuracy portrayed by Sprague. This can especially be seen in a comparison of the patterns on each dress and the backgrounds of the paintings.

Despite the naturalistic appearance, these girls are still posed in a certain way, with undeniable parallels between them. Sitting on an indistinguishable object, the young peasant in Bonnat's piece has a somber look on her face and her hands placed in her lap. On the other hand, Sprague's peasant stands with the same unhappy look and her hands

[108] Adler, 251.

joined together in front of her as she waits for her jug to fill with water. Both Sprague and Bonnat also employ similar techniques of light and shadow. In the latter's work, there is light hitting the area near the peasant's feet and the upper portion of her body, creating a shadow to the left of her. Likewise, Sprague uses light to highlight the area near the peasant's feet and the upper portion of the peasant and the wall behind her to create a shadow to the right of her and illuminate the left side of her blouse. As this analysis demonstrates, Sprague was undoubtedly influenced by his French master Bonnat, particularly in subject matter, style, and treatment of light; however, his rendering is still distinct from Bonnat's in its close adherence to naturalism and attention to detail.

John Singer Sargent and Charles Émile Carolus-Duran

John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) began his Parisian art training with Charles Émile Carolus-Durand (also known as Carolus-Duran) (1837-1917), a portrait painter who was known for his bold technique and untraditional teaching methods. In 1874, Sargent passed the arduous exam required to gain admission to the École des Beaux-Arts, the most prestigious art school in France. He excelled in the qualifying exams that followed and came in second place among 179 competitors.[109] Carolus-Duran's atelier was considered progressive, rejecting the traditional academic approach, which required careful drawing and underpainting, preferring the method of *alla prima*, painting directly on the canvas and applying wet paint to previous layers of paint.[110] Carolus-Duran also emphasized the form by precisely positioning light and dark, and

[109] Trevor J. Fairbrother, *John Singer Sargent: The Sensualist* (Seattle, WA: Seattle Art Museum, 2000), 46.
[110] Adler, 28; Patricia Hills et al., *John Singer Sargent* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art in Association with H.N. Abrams, 1986), 28.

encouraged artists to paint what they saw journalistically.[111] The painting master came to the studio twice a week to visit with his students and criticize their work.[112] Sargent also spent time in studying on his own and painting in a studio he shared with James Carroll Beckwith.[113] Sargent finally left Carolus-Duran's atelier in 1878.

There can be no doubt that Sargent's training with Carolus-Duran influenced his work. Each artist's oeuvre of portraits of gentlemen and socialites is incredibly similar to one another, making it sometimes difficult to distinguish them. The parallels between their works can easily be seen in a comparison of Sargent's *Madame X (Madame Pierre Gautreau)* (1883-84) [Figure 8] and Carolus-Duran's *Portrait of Mademoiselle X* (1873) [Figure 9]. Each work features a young, fair-skinned woman in an expensive satin dress standing and resting one hand on a table. Unlike the woman in Carolus-Duran's portrait, Sargent's sitter does not look out at the viewer, but turns her head in profile, highlighting the elegant curve of her neck. Both artists portrayed their patrons realistically, though not with the same attention to detail and precision of naturalism, as in previous examples. The brushstrokes can still be seen in each work, particularly in the dresses, the tabletop and monochromatic background of *Madame X*, and the rug flowing down the stairs in *Mademoiselle X*. Although the dress in Carolus-Duran's piece is much more elaborate than Sargent's simple black dress, featuring filigree, tiny beads, and fringe at the bottom, there is hardly enough detail to make out individual beads or strands in the fringe.

Similarly, each artist creates strong contrasts within their piece; the pale skin of *Madame X* stands out against the black of her dress while *Mademoiselle X*'s bright white

[111] Warren Adelson et al., *Sargent Abroad: Figures and Landscapes* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1997), 11.
[112] Fairbrother, 46.
[113] Charles Merrill Mount, *John Singer Sargent, A Biography* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1955), 49.

dress and pale skin are in stark contrast to the black background. While it seems that Sargent may have been following in his master's footsteps to gain success by working with a similar clientele and in the same style, his *Madame X* did not go over smoothly at the Salon of 1884. Although the stylistic parallels between these works are quite apparent, Sargent's piece was controversial and considered suggestive due to a shoulder strap falling down. This elicited negative reactions from many critics and Sargent soon left Paris for London permanently.[114]

Elizabeth Jane Gardner and William-Adolphe Bouguereau

Another student and master pair, Elizabeth Gardner (1836-1922) and William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905), are notable specifically because of the nature of their relationship and their close styles. Gardner was among the first wave of Americans artists who pursued art training in Paris after the Civil War. After attending the Young Ladies' Female Academy in Exeter, she attended the Lasell Female Seminary in Auburndale Massachusetts, where she studied languages and art. After graduating in 1856, she taught French at the newly opened Worcester School of Design and Fine Arts in Worcester, Massachusetts.[115] In 1864, Gardner and her former art teacher at the Lasell Seminary, Imogene Robinson, traveled to Paris to study art.[116] In the fall, Gardner applied to the École des Beaux-Arts, but her application was rejected since the school, like many art institutions at the time, only admitted men. By the late 1870s, Gardner was studying with Bouguereau at the Académie Julian, where instructors taught in pairs and gave critiques

[114] Adler, 42.
[115] Eleanor Tufts et al., *American Women Artists, 1830-1930* (Washington, D.C.: International Exhibitions Foundation for the National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1987), 46.
[116] Fronia E. Wissman, *Bouguereau* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1996), 115.

every other month to prevent students from strictly following one style.[117] In remarking on Bouguereau's teaching style, the March 1912 issue of the Académie Julian's monthly magazine reported: "He would stop before each easel, would critique the drawing, modify the palette, and would never leave without giving a word of encouragement."[118] Gardner and Bouguereau had an engagement that lasted seventeen years before they finally married in 1896. Unlike typical relationships between art masters and students, these two artists clearly had a closer one than most, which could have easily led to both of them having very similar styles.

Adhering to the French Academic style, Bouguereau's work is known for featuring naturalism, rich colors, and young women or children. While Gardner's oeuvre does not feature as many young girls, her style is very similar to her husband's, as evidenced by a comparison of her piece, *A Young Girl Holding a Basket of Grapes* (undated) [Figure 10], and Bouguereau's *Harvester* (1875) [Figure 11]. In fact, many art critics commented on their similar styles, suggesting Gardner was just an imitator of Bouguereau.[119] Gardner herself was aware of these critiques of her work and stated in an interview in 1910, "I know I am censured for not more boldly asserting my individuality, but I would rather be known as the best imitator of Bouguereau than be nobody!"[120] Both aforementioned artworks feature almost identical color palettes comprised of red, dark blue, white brown, and green. Yet, the most strikingly parallel between these paintings is their subject. Each of the young girls in these images holds a basket of grapes and stands surrounded by foliage. Both girls also share the same pose by looking directly at the

[117] Wissman, 110.
[118] Wissman, 111.
[119] Wissman, 116.
[120] Wissman, 116.

viewer, standing with the body slightly angled, extending the right arm to grasp the edge of the basket, and bending the left arm. Even their dresses look alike with stark white tops, dark colored skirts, and realistic draping of their clothes.

In terms of style, both paintings appear to have the smooth finish and true to life accuracy of naturalism, from the precise color and shape of the grapes and plant's leaves to the detail of their veins. Similar in appearance, the skin of each girl is flesh-like, supple, and flawless. It is clear from this comparison that Bouguereau and Gardner's works share many characteristics, which likely resulted not just from her study, but also from their close relationship. However, despite what the critics said, Gardner was an acclaimed artist in her own right, becoming the only American woman to win a gold medal at a Paris Salon in 1877.[121] Knoedler's gallery in New York even bought her 1884 Salon painting without first having seen it, clearly believing it would be a work of quality no matter what it looked like.[122]

Childe Hassam and Impressionism

Known for his urban and coastal scenes, Frederick Childe Hassam (1859-1935) was one of the most renowned nineteenth-century American Impressionists. Lacking significant formal art training, Hassam and his friend and colleague, Edmund H. Garrett, spent two months studying in Europe during the summer of 1883.[123] Hassam and Garrett traveled throughout the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Switzerland, and Spain, studying the Old Masters together and painting scenes of the European

[121] Wissman, 115.
[122] Wissman, 115.
[123] Warren Adelson, Jay Cantor, and William H. Gerdts, *Childe Hassam, Impressionist* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1999), 9-10.

countryside.[124] A few years after this trip, Hassam decided to return to Paris with his wife in 1886. Although he participated in formal drawing classes with Gustave Boulanger and Jules Joseph Lefebvre at the Académie Julian, it was not long before he began his own self-study, stating that "The Julian academy is the personification of routine... [academic training] crushes all originality out of growing men. It tends to put them in a rut and it keeps them in it", preferring instead, "my own method in the same degree."[125] While Hassam did briefly train with French artists in Paris, it is apparent that he was more attracted to the style and common subjects of the French Impressionists rather than any of the French artists he took classes with. Although he did not meet any of the artists, he was likely inspired by French Impressionist paintings on display in museums and exhibitions, especially a retrospective exhibition of Claude Monet and Rodin at Galerie Georges Petit in 1889.[126]

A part of Hassam's famous "Flag series," *Flags on the Waldorf* (1916) [Figure 12] is remarkably similar to the works of Impressionists like Claude Monet and Èdouard Manet, both of whom created well-known works with relatively the same content as Hassam's. Though different in subject because these works focus on an event in Paris, they nevertheless portray a scene with numerous flags lining the street and buildings. Hassam began his flag series in response to a "Preparedness Parade" during World War I and *Flags on the Waldorf* has a distinctly American character, showing the country's flags displayed on a New York street.[127] On the other hand, Monet's *Rue Montorgueil, Paris, Festival of June 30, 1878* (1878) [Figure 13] represents a festival declared that

[124] Adelson (1999), 10.
[125] Ulrich W. Hiesinger, *Childe Hassam: American Impressionist* (Munich: Prestel, 1994), 32.
[126] Adelson (1999), 234.
[127] Adelson (1999), 65.

year by the government to celebrate "peace and work," and was intended to be a symbol of France's recovery after the defeat of 1870.[128] Hassam's work is typically considered patriotic, especially this series, but Monet's piece also has nationalistic overtones.[129] It is therefore not surprising Hassam would turn to a similar style.

While the style of Hassam's *Flags* is slightly different from Monet's in *Rue Montorgueil*, there is no doubt that Hassam was inspired by the French Impressionists. Artists working in this style sought to capture the impression of a scene, how they saw it, rather than the naturalism and all of its details. In both works, there is practically no detail in the buildings, flags, or the people, but Hassam's piece does include slightly more detail in the buildings than Monet's. One can make out a few individual figures in Hassam's work, but when looking at the crowds depicted in each artwork, it is almost impossible to tell one figure from the next. The same can be said for the flags, which run together, making it difficult to tell where one begins and another ends. More importantly, just as in Monet's piece, all of the small brushstrokes are visible in Hassam's work. This Impressionist technique of using a multitude of small strokes of color works to suggest the animation of the crowd and the wavering of flags. Similar in perspective, Hassam's work also has a vantage point above the crowd, though not as high as Monet's piece, and looking down the street. Hassam's artwork clearly embodies many characteristics of Impressionism and has much in common with Monet's work, but Hassam's piece is still unique in appearance and does not contain the same liveliness that Monet's has.

There is no doubt that American artists who studied in France were greatly impacted by their French masters. As the examples in this chapter have demonstrated,

[128] Adelson (1999), 56-57.
[129] Adelson (1999), 68.

many of the American artists that trained in France were in some way influenced by the style or subjects of their instructors or other contemporary French artists. While some American artists, such as Gardner and Sargent, closely adopted the style and subject matter of their instructors, others, like Hassam, Eakins, and Millet, only adhered to some of the elements of their mentors' teaching. Rather, they developed their own unique manner to produce artworks with a distinct character. It is difficult to say to what extent these American artists felt they had to imitate the French in order to be successful, but Gardner's remarks about emulating Bouguereau provide a brief glimpse. She and other artists were undoubtedly aware that in order to be considered someone known in the art world, they would have to take on the style and subjects of an artist who was already successful. Nevertheless, it is uncertain whether Americans were more worried about the influence of French art or its corrupt culture. Some could have seen this clear effect on American artists as proof that the leap to immoral behavior was not unlikely.

CHAPTER V

VIEWS OF AMERICAN COLLECTORS

While there was a strong division between American art critics about the influence of French art, the division in American art collectors was less pronounced. During the late 1840s and 1850s, American collectors were dedicated to the patronage of American art, but they soon began collecting artworks by French academic artists who took a naturalistic approach toward figural paintings and by Barbizon artists who painted romantic landscapes.[130] Concurring with the arrival of new, innovative schools of painting, businessmen experiencing a large growth of personal fortunes, and collectors developing broader interests, patronage of the arts received a significant impetus during the second half of the nineteenth century.[131] These patrons decided to exhibit their newfound wealth with material objects, such as works of art, and were typically assisted by European dealers with branches in the United States or American dealers using American painters who had previously trained in Paris as agents.[132] According to Gustav

[130] George, 8.
[131] *Collectors' Choice: Masterpieces of French Art from New York Private Collections: Loan Exhibition, for the Benefit of the Public Education Association, March 17 to April 18, 1953* (New York: Paul Rosenberg & Co., 1953), 8.
[132] George, 13.

Kobbé at *Forum*, this interest in foreign art was due to "the prosperity that set in after the Civil War, coupled with the ignorance of many of those who acquired wealth at that time" and "The name attached to the canvas meant more to the ignorant buyer than the canvas itself."[133] Since then, later generations have mostly followed the lead of nineteenth-century collectors, favoring all succeeding developments of French art, even up to the early 1950s.[134] Although there were many collectors who gravitated toward French art, especially with the guidance of French-trained American artists, other collectors preferred to acquire American artworks only. Some nationalistic critics additionally tried to advocate for the sole patronage of American artists; however, for the most part, there remained a strong affinity for nineteenth-century French art among American collectors.

Collecting French Art

The number of American collectors that acquired contemporary French art in the nineteenth-century is quite significant. In the memoirs of the French art dealer Ambroise Vollard, he suggested to an American collector of French art that "If this goes on, we shall soon be obliged to go to America to see the best European pictures."[135] By 1886, the amount of French artworks acquired by Americans had become so significant that the French government sent an investigator.[136] His report was published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in July and September of 1887, reinforcing the concerns about French art in America: "I would never have believed, had I not confirmed it myself, that the United

[133] Gustav Kobbe, "American Art Coming into Its Own," *Forum* 27 (1899): 301.
[134] *Collector's Choice*, 8.
[135] Ambroise Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer* (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), 142.
[136] George, 13.

States, so young a country, could be so rich in works of painting, especially works of the French school. It is not by the hundreds but by the thousands that one must count them."[137] His statement strongly reflects just how popular French art became in America and the significant number of patrons who were drawn to it.

Of notability, the Walters Art Gallery collection developed out of a "parlor collection" of contemporary French art amassed by William Thompson Walters, a resident of Liverpool, Pennsylvania, in the late 1850s.[138] At the beginning of the Civil War, Walters and his family decided to set off for Paris.[139] During the war, Walters sold the majority of his American art collection, and despite having a limited amount of funds upon his arrival in France, he commissioned several artworks from well-known French artists, including Jean-Léon Gérôme, Camille Corot, and Honore Daumier.[140] Walters was mainly attracted to the Barbizon school of landscapists and the Academic artists celebrated at the Paris salons, but occasionally he developed a strong interest in individual artists, such as the caricaturist Paul Gavarni, Léon Bonvin, and Antoine-Louis Barye, and collected their works extensively. [141]

Walters' son, Henry Walters, had much broader interests than his father, ranging from prehistoric objects to artworks of the early twentieth century; however, he continued to increase his father's collection of mid-nineteenth-century French art with paintings by both earlier and later artists.[142] These artists included Theodore Rousseau, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Rosa Bonheur, central figures from the romantic era, such as J. A. D. Ingres and

[137] George, 13.
[138] William R. Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Art: From Romanticism to Art Nouveau: The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore* (London: Scala, 2000), 7.
[139] Johnston, 7.
[140] Johnston, 7.
[141] Johnston, 7.
[142] Johnston, 9.

Eugene Delacroix, and although he was not personally drawn to Impressionism, he also added noteworthy works by Èdouard Manet, Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley, and Edgar Degas.[143]

As collectors of the Impressionists, Louisine Havemeyer and her husband purchased several works by Manet, Degas, and Desire François Laugee from the 1886 exhibition.[144] By July 1889, the Havemeyers had been collecting more seriously and acquired 20 works by Barbizon artists and Old Masters from Paul Durand-Ruel in Paris for the price of more than 800,000 francs.[145] By the early twentieth-century, the Havemeyers had amassed the largest collection of Impressionist works in the United States, half of which was owed to the assistance of Durand-Ruel.[146] The dealer Vollard recalls the Havemeyers buying at least three Cezannes and that they were typically advised by the American artist, Mary Cassatt, when buying French works.[147]

One of the French art dealers well-known for selling to American collectors was Paul Durand-Ruel. Durand-Ruel started his career by working in his father's art gallery, which he then took over in 1865.[148] At the beginning, he was solely focused on purchasing the work of Barbizon artists, specifically Camille Corot, Charles-François Daubigny, and Jules Dupré.[149] In the early 1870s, Durand-Ruel met Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro, and although the Impressionists had been condemned by the art world, Durand-Ruel decided to purchase not only their work, but also that of Pierre-Auguste

[143] Johnston, 9.
[144] Sylvie Patry et al., *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market* (London: National Gallery Company Limited, 2015), 149.
[145] Patry, 149.
[146] Patry, 149.
[147] Vollard, 140-142.
[148] *"Paul Durand-Ruel," Britannica Academic, accessed February 27, 2016, http://academic.eb.com/EBchecked/topic/174135/Paul-Durand-Ruel.*
[149] "Paul Durand-Ruel."

Renoir, Mary Cassatt, Edgar Degas, Alfred Sisley, Édouard Manet, and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes as well.[150]

American collectors, artists, and dealers were frequent visitors to Durand-Ruel's businesses at rue de la Paix and the rue Laffitte in Paris from the mid-1860s, before Durand-Ruel later opened a gallery in New York City in 1887.[151] Records of patrons from New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Boston can be found in the Durand-Ruel's Parisian gallery's account books, with Levi Parsons Morton, an American collector, banker, distinguished Congressman, ambassador, and Vice-President, being the first recorded.[152] On September 13th 1865, Morton purchased his paintings by Hugues Merle, Joseph-Urbain Melin and Léon Caille from Durand-Ruel.[153] After Morton, there were several clients from Philadelphia, including Adolph E. Borie, an importer of goods from Mexico and Asia who purchased more than 35 French paintings from Durand-Ruel over six years.[154] At the time of his death in 1880, his collection amounted to 115 works, including four by Eugéne Delacroix, three by Henri Rousseau, four by François Millet, one by Henri Fantin-Latour, and one by Eugen Boudin.[155] Bori also promoted Durand-Ruel's gallery to his colleagues, including Henry Probasco, a Cincinnati hardware merchant, and Philadelphians William P. Wilstach, J. Gillingham Fell, and Henry Gibson.[156]

There were also several well-known American artists who assisted American collectors in their purchases. Mary Cassatt accompanied collector Louisine Elder to a

[150] "Paul Durand-Ruel."
[151] Patry, 136.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Patry, 136.
[154] Patry, 136.
[155] Patry, 136.
[156] Ibid.

Paris shop in 1877 to buy a Degas pastel and a Monet landscape.[157] Cassatt herself began collecting Impressionist paintings in 1878 and persuaded her family to follow suit. In November 1880, Cassatt started advising her brother Alexander, then Vice-President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, on purchasing French artwork for his house outside Philadelphia.[158] She had initially acquired a Degas, Monet, and Pissarro for her brother, but a few years later, Alexander's collection included over 30 Impressionist paintings.[159] In the spring of 1884, another collector, Frank Thomson, asked Cassatt to find Monets for him, and soon he and his daughter bought works by Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, Sisley, Degas, and Cassatt from Durand-Ruel's gallery.[160]

Another American artist acting as an agent, J. Alden Weir, bought modern artworks in Paris for Erwin Davis, a businessman with interests in mining and finance. In 1880, Weir obtained Bastien-Lepage's *Joan of Arc* from the Salon, and a year later he acquired two works by Georges Michel, a Degas, and two Manets from Durand-Ruel.[161] William Morris Hunt also aided Boston collectors, such as Quincy Adams Shaw, a wealthy businessman and philanthropist, and his wife, the instructor Pauline Agassiz Shaw. The Shaws accumulated the largest collection of Millets in America and second in the world, after Britain's James Staats Forbes.[162]

Collecting American Art

Although a significant number of wealthy Americans were patrons of

[157] Adler et al, 216; Patry, 137.
[158] Frances Weitzenhoffer, *The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1986), 26.
[159] Patry, 139.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Erica E. Hirshler and Mary Anne. Stevens, *Impressionism Abroad: Boston and French Painting* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005), 21.

contemporary French art in the latter half of the nineteenth century, some believed that American collectors should not patronize foreign art, but support their own native artists. In the 1861 article, "American Art," in *Knickerbocker*, Mrs. J. H. Layton claimed that it was the fault of American art patrons that national art was not encouraged.[163] Layton stated "it is the fault of those who have assumed to patronize the fine arts; who pay six thousand dollars for a Meissonnier, but who will not pay six thousand cents for an American genre-painting."[164] Furthermore, the author directly addresses these patrons: "Art-Patrons! Would you evince your patriotism? Lay your gold on the shrine of your country by placing it in the hand of the struggling American artist."[165]

In April of 1893, George Parsons Lathrop reported on the development of American art in an article, "The Progress of Art in New York," in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. In his evaluation, Lathrop spends a great deal of time explaining the problem of Americans preferring French painting over American works, which were considered lesser quality.[166] Lathrop stated that "patrons and collectors should apply themselves earnestly to the pleasant and creditable duty of buying and ordering American works on their merits, in preference to foreign works."[167] To further encourage patrons to collect American art and convince them about the merits of it, Lathrop asserts "We have to-day every facility for instructing and moulding [sic] the young artist, and not only completely grounding him in all the elements of his art, but also carrying him far along the road

[163] J. H. Layton, "American Art," *Knickerbocker* 68 (July 1861): 48.
[164] Layton, 49.
[165] Layton, 52.
[166] George Parson Lathrop, "The Progress of Art in New York," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 86 (April 1893): 740-751.
[167] Lathrop, 750.

toward the highest accomplishment."[168] Lathrop attempts to appeal to Americans collectors by stating:

> What is most needed now is a recognition of this fact, and a vivid sense on the part of the businessman and connoisseurs that the best and most far-sighted thing they can do, for themselves as well as for art, is to patronize American artists lavishly and sincerely, patriotically, yet with discrimination, and with an independent taste for what is good and genuine that should not lean upon foreign fashion.[169]

Lathrop recognized that it was wealthy businessmen who were typically collecting art and tried to persuade them to collect American art by promoting the great condition of the arts in the United States and appealing to collectors' sense of nationalism. However, Lathrop also notes that patrons should make sure to discern which artworks are of good quality.

Unlike the previously mentioned American collectors, Thomas Benedict Clarke, a businessman, dealer, patron, and connoisseur, preferred to collect paintings of his fellow Americans.[170] After making his fortune by manufacturing collars and cuffs, Clarke began collecting contemporary American art in 1870s, starting with purchases of numerous works by George Inness and Winslow Homer.[171] The Clarke collection was mostly comprised of landscapes and genre pictures with a small portion of portraits.[172] Clarke was a strong supporter of both Inness and Homer, and he even organized exhibitions for

[168] Lathrop, 751.
[169] Lathrop, 751.
[170] Thomas E. Norton, *100 Years of Collecting in America: The Story of Sotheby Parke Bernet* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1984), 47.
[171] Norton, 47.
[172] Kobbe, 299.

Homer at the Century Association, in addition to praising him to Clarke's extensive group of friends.[173] When Clarke finally auctioned off his collection in1899, there were no fewer than thirty-nine works by Inness and thirty-one by Homer.[174] Furthermore, Clarke did not think it was solely his responsibility to purchase native paintings, but encouraged other collectors to patronize American art.[175] After being invited to view another American collector's art collection, Clarke asked, "Haven't you any American paintings?"[176] In response, the collector replied, "American! Are there any?"[177] Clarke followed this conversation with a trip to an Academy exhibition with this collector, and it was from this point on that he became a generous patron of American art.[178]

As with the idea of American artists studying in France, there was definitely some difference of opinion, though not significant, among American collectors. The large number of collectors who patronized French art explains why so many artists felt they needed to learn French techniques. On the other hand, those who preferred to support native artists felt that to participate in this Francophile trend would be damaging to American artists and likely the entire school of American art itself. Based on the oppositional opinions, as with those about artists going to Paris, there was not necessarily anything wrong with French art, but these collectors and critics similarly felt a need to promote American art and their nation for many of the same reasons as the critics who supported American art.

[173] Norton, 47
[174] Ibid.
[175] Kobbe, 302.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

While there was overwhelming support for nineteenth-century artists traveling to Paris to study, newspapers and art journals from that time period clearly prove that there were also many who opposed this foreign influence as early as the 1850s and continued to do so well into the nineteenth century. Those against it regarded the European way as old, unoriginal, and decadent. They wanted to build their own school of art that would consist of fresh and original designs and techniques that were not steeped in European traditions. Even anti-French art sentiments infiltrated the sphere of collectors. While the disagreement among American collectors of art was less pronounced, given the numerous American collectors that patronized French art, there was nevertheless a difference of opinion when it came to collecting native or foreign art. This urge to create a school of American art, keep its native artists in their home country, and solely collect local artwork greatly echoed the calls for union and reconstruction during and after the Civil War. Tensions between the United States and France, due to the latter's meddling in Mexico and precarious role in the Civil War, and anti-Catholic attitudes were also likely partially to blame for this rejection of French training and complaints from critics. Americans believed Catholic Frenchmen and women to be immoral and against everything the United States stood for, therefore it is not surprising critics would be concerned about any influence from French on Americans. Nevertheless, nineteenth-century fears of French influence and imitation by American artists and critics were not

unfounded. Comparisons of the works of American artists who studied with French masters demonstrate that American art was significantly affected and some artists closely adopted the style and techniques of their teacher. It is difficult to determine whether Americans were more concerned with the influence of French art or its culture, but its impact on American artists likely convinced some that the corrupt ways of the French could easily permeate American culture as well.

1913 Armory Show

This controversy over French art training and its influence also had lasting effects for American and French art. In particular, these nineteenth-century attitudes likely informed the debate that was sparked by the Armory Show in 1913, in which the exhibition was often condemned for bringing French influence to America. About 1,300 paintings, sculptures, and drawings by nearly 300 artists were displayed at the 69th Regiment drill hall in New York City, with roughly one-third being foreign.[179] To those who opposed the show, "their homeland was under invasion by a foreign artistic force," and in response, they "took up arms to defend America from besieging Cubists, Futurists, and Fauvists."[180] Many believed that the European art that was exhibited "stole the show" and left American art in the shadows.[181] There were often so many people surrounding Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* that it was difficult to see.[182]

Publications like the New York *Sun* hailed the show as "sensational" and "an event not on any account to be missed," while the *New York Times* believed that "no one

[179] Milton W. Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show* (Place of Publication Not Identified: Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation; Distributed by New York Graphic Society, 1963), 89; Elizabeth Lunday, *The Modern Art Invasion: Picasso, Duchamp, and the 1913 Armory Show That Scandalized America* (Guilford, Connecticut: Lyons Press, 2013), XI.
[180] Lunday, X.
[181] Brown, 27.
[182] Brown, 109.

within reach of it can afford to ignore it."[183] While initial reactions to the exhibition were mainly positive, once the conservative critics began lashing out and mocking it, the rest of the public came to condemn it as well.[184] One woman remarked to her friends that "If I caught my boy Tommy making pictures like that, I'd certainly give him a good spanking."[185] The headline of one newspaper read, "Nobody Who Has Been Drinking Is Let In To See This Show," while another proclaimed, "No Imagination Outside the Psychopathic Ward of Bellevue or the Confines of Matteawan [State Hospital for the Criminality Insane] Can Conceive Without Actually Seeing It What a Cubist Picture Is Like."[186] Similarly, reviewers made comments such as, "the next time the baby builds his blocks into a nice castle and then knocks them down you must have the resulting chaos photographed and call it 'Nude Exercising on the Trapeze' or the 'Empress Taking a Bath in Pink Molasses Surrounded by Centipedes."[187] Additionally, some artists were singled out by critics. The *New York Times* described Henri Matisse as "turning humanity back towards its brutish beginnings."[188] Likewise, Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* was criticized as "an explosion in a shingle factory."[189]

The show did not stay put for long though, as many of the works also traveled to Chicago and Boston. The exhibition faced even harsher criticisms in Chicago with words such as, "nasty, obscene, indecent, immoral, lewd, and demoralizing" being used to describe it.[190] As the result of disagreements, some paintings were even removed from

[183] Brown, 28-29.
[184] Brown, 28.
[185] Lunday, XI.
[186] Lunday, 63-64.
[187] Lunday, 64.
[188] Lunday, 65.
[189] Brown, 110.
[190] Frank Trapp, *The 1913 Armory Show in Retrospect* (Amherst: Amherst College, 1958), 7.

the show to satisfy the public.[191] Conversely, Bostonians were less critical and enthusiastic in their reactions to the show. Residents ignored the show and many newspapers avoided discussing it, resulting in slow sales.[192]

Many of these examples of harsh criticism were directed specifically at European art and its artists, particularly the French, whereas the reviews of the American art section were almost entirely positive and its artists were lauded for their "strength and individuality."[193] While the objections to the French artworks may seem like they are strictly about modernism on the surface, they echo the same complaints nineteenth-century art critics and anti-Catholic nativists had during the late nineteenth century about France and its art being decadent, immoral, unoriginal, and harmful to American artists, either by its influence or its popularity. As was the case in the nineteenth century, many Americans were also worried that as a result of all the talk about European modernism, critics would neglect American artists and collectors would no longer buy American paintings.[194] Despite that some artists and critics viewed the show as a success, artists such as Robert Henri were enraged by what had happened and actually swore off the influence of French artists.[195] Although greater interest in European modernism than in American art may have been the case for some years to come, New York soon became the art capital of the world in the mid-twentieth century, with artists flocking to it like they had once done with Paris.

[191] Lunday, 96.
[192] Trapp, 7; Lunday, 111.
[193] Lunday, 84-85.
[194] Lunday, 72.
[195] Lunday, 135.

FIGURES

Figure 1: Jean-François Millet, *The Sower*, 1850, oil on canvas.

Figure 2: William Morris Hunt, *La Marguerite II*, 1853, oil on canvas.

Figure 3: William Morris Hunt, *La Marguerite I*, 1851, oil on canvas.

Figure 4: Thomas Eakins, The *Swimming Hole*, 1885, oil on canvas.

Figure 5: Jean-Léon Gerome, *La Grande piscine à Brusa*, 1885, oil on canvas.

Figure 6: Charles Sprague Pearce, *L'Italienne* (*At the Fountain*), 1875, oil on canvas.

Figure 7: Léon Bonnat, *Italian Woman*, mid-1860s, oil on canvas.

Figure 8: John Singer Sargent, *Madame X (Madame Pierre Gautreau)*, 1883-84, oil on canvas.

Figure 9: Charles Auguste Émile Durand, *Portrait of Mademoiselle X*, 1873, oil on canvas.

Figure 10: Elizabeth Gardner, *A Young Girl Holding a Basket of Grapes*, undated, oil on canvas.

Figure 11: William-Adolphe Bouguereau, *Harvester*, 1875, oil on canvas.

Figure 12: Childe Hassam, *Flags on the Waldorf*, 1916, oil on canvas.

Figure 13: Claude Monet, *Rue Montorgueil, Paris, Festival of June 30, 1878*, 1878, oil on canvas.

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